

**RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

NOTE: This directive is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. It should not be constructed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violation of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

Chapter 4	Number 10	Effective Date 01/07/11	Review Date 2014
Subject POLICE FUNERALS AND DEATH NOTIFICATIONS			☐ New Order ☒ Replaces G.O. 4-10 (04/14/08)
References CALEA 22.2.4, 55.2.6 VLEPSC ADM.23.04b, OPR.07.09a General Order 7-29			
 _____ Chief of Police or Designee		01/07/11 _____ Date	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish the policy and procedure for funeral services for active and former **employees** of the Richmond Police Department and the notification of the next of kin.

II. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the Richmond Police Department to pay fitting honor and tribute to both sworn and civilian **employees** killed in the line-of-duty, **employees** who die while in **active** service, retired officers, or **retired civilians** with honorable service. When appropriate and if requested, the Department shall also pay proper tribute to law enforcement officers killed in the line-of-duty from other jurisdictions.
- B. It **is** the policy of the Department to provide services to include notifying the family of the deceased or injured officer in a timely, personal manner, assisting the family at the hospital, supporting the family at the funeral and burial and providing the family with information relative to qualified death benefits.
- C. It is the policy of the Department that the name of the deceased or injured **employee** shall not be released to the media or other parties, until the immediate family has been notified. These guidelines may be modified to accommodate the family's wishes in accordance with departmental procedures, the type of memorial service and the operational needs of the Department.
- D. It is the policy of the Richmond Police Department to maintain a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Program consisting of specially trained peer supporters, and professional mental health providers to give all Police Department **employees** the opportunity to receive tangible peer support through times of personal or professional

crisis and/or help anticipate and address potential problems. Employees may initiate contact with an on-call Peer Support Team member at any time during or after an incident by notifying the Department of Emergency Communication (DEC) who will maintain a listing of on-call team members. For additional information regarding the services and/or scope of the CISM Program, see General Order 7-29, Critical Incident Stress Management Team.

III. ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

All employees are expected to fully comply with the guidelines and timelines set forth in this general order. Failure to comply will result in appropriate corrective action. Responsibility rests with the Division Commander to ensure that any violations of policy are investigated and appropriate training, counseling and/or disciplinary action is initiated.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH: The death of an active duty sworn employee during the course of performing police or police related functions.
- B. NON-LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH: The death of an active duty, sworn employee not in the performance of police-related duties or functions.
- C. NEXT OF KIN/SURVIVORS: Immediate family members of the deceased employee to include spouse, children, parents and siblings.
- D. RICHMOND METROPOLITAN AREA: Consists of cities of Richmond, Colonial Heights, Hopewell, and Petersburg; the town of Ashland and the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan and Prince George or as designated by the Chief of Police or designee.

V. PROCEDURE

A. Funeral Services and Ceremonies:

1. Line-of-Duty Funeral Service:

The funeral service for a police officer killed in the line-of-duty shall be as follows:

- a) The officer may be buried in uniform with a taped-on badge.
- b) An Honor Guard consisting of two (2) police officers in full dress uniform shall serve as Casket Guards. The Casket Guard Watch will be conducted for all public viewing and shall commence one hour prior to the funeral.
 - (1) The Watch shall be divided into shifts, with two officers standing at intervals of no more than fifteen minutes each. One officer shall stand at the head of the casket and the other at the foot, standing at “parade rest”.

- (2) When relieving the Watch, the movements of the officers shall be at a slow cadence. This includes marching and saluting.
 - c) Subject to the wishes of the family, the **employee's** Division OIC may select six (6) uniformed pallbearers and six (6) honorary pallbearers in uniform or civilian clothing from active members of the Police Department.
 - d) The Police Honor Guard shall be present for funeral and burial services. The Police Department shall assist in the flag folding ceremony.
 - e) Subject to the wishes of the family, the OIC of the Personnel and Recruitment **Unit** or designee shall assign a Departmental Liaison Officer and a Police Chaplain to assist the family.
 - f) Subject to the wishes of the family, **employees** of the Richmond Police Department shall conduct normal military formations and ceremonies. This shall include the "Call to Attention", 3 rifle volleys from the Honor Guard and a "Hand Salute". A Department Bugler shall play "Taps" at the gravesite of the deceased.
 - g) The badges of all **employees** of the Police Department shall be covered by a "black mourning band", 1/2" in width, from the date of death of the officer until 0800 hours on the day after the funeral.
 - h) A police motor escort will accompany the hearse to the cemetery.
 - i) All flags displayed at police facilities shall fly at half-mast from the date of death of the officer until 0800 hours on the day after the funeral.
 - j) ***The OIC of the Personnel and Recruitment Unit or designee shall ensure*** a wreath/floral arrangement will be displayed at the gravesite where the body rests.
2. Non Line-of-Duty Funeral (Active):
- The funeral service for an officer who dies not in the line-of-duty while in police service shall conform to all of the guidelines listed above with the exception of the Casket Guard Watch and the 3 rifle volleys.
3. The funeral services for Retired Officers shall be as follows:
- a) The officer may be buried in uniform with a taped-on badge.
 - b) Subject to the wishes of the family, if the burial services are held within the Richmond Metropolitan area, the Police Honor Guard shall be present for the funeral and burial services. The Police Department shall assist in the flag folding ceremony.

- c) Subject to the wishes of the family, if burial services are held within the Richmond Metropolitan area, **employees** of the Richmond Police Department shall conduct normal military formations and ceremonies. This shall include the “Call to Attention” and a “Hand Salute”. A Department Bugler shall play “Taps” at the gravesite of the deceased.
 - d) Subject to the wishes of the family, the OIC of the Personnel and Recruitment **Unit** or designee shall assign a Departmental Liaison Officer and a Police Chaplain to assist the family.
4. The funeral services for civilian employees shall be as follows:
- a) Subject to the wishes of the family, the **employee’s** Division OIC may select pallbearers in uniform or civilian clothing from active members of the Police Department.
 - b) The Police Honor Guard shall be present for the funeral and burial services if they are held within the Richmond Metropolitan area.
 - c) Subject to the wishes of the family, the OIC of the Personnel and Recruitment **Unit** or designee shall assign a Departmental Liaison Officer and a Police Chaplain to assist the family.
5. ***The funeral services for Retired Civilians shall be as follows:***
- Subject to the wishes of the family, the OIC of Personnel and Recruitment Unit shall assign a Department Liaison Officer and a Chaplain to assist the family.***
6. Out-of-Agency Funeral:
- If requested to pay tribute to a fallen comrade and with authorization of the Chief of Police or designee, the Department’s Honor Guard may honor the deceased officer.
7. Exceptions and/or Deviations to Policy:
- a) The Chief of Police or designee may authorize exceptions and/or deviations to this policy, to include authorization for the Honor Guard to travel outside of the Richmond Metropolitan area and modifications to defined funeral procedures, based upon operational needs of the Department and attempts to conform to family wishes.
 - b) ***The Honor Guard Supervisor has the authority to modify Honor Guard funeral procedures based upon the operational needs of the Department and wishes of the deceased employee’s family.***

B. Notification Procedures and Responsibilities:

1. *The notification of Department personnel shall be made as follows:*

- a) *If a Department employee is killed in the line-of-duty, it shall be the responsibility of the Chief of Police or designee to verify the death. Once verified, the Chief of Police or designee will notify the employee's highest chain of command. A representative from the Personnel & Recruitment Unit is responsible for completing the Death Notification Form (PD-77) within 72 hours. The HR Division Chief will send a formal All Personnel email notifying staff of the funeral arrangements.*
- b) *If a Department employee is killed (or becomes deceased), not in the line-of-duty, the employee's immediate supervisor shall verify the death. The supervisor will complete the PD-77 within 72 hours and forward through the employee's chain of command to the Personnel & Recruitment Unit. The HR Division Chief will send a formal All Personnel email notifying staff of the death and funeral arrangements.*
- c) *For retiree deaths, the Personnel & Recruitment Unit Sergeant will verify the death. Once verified, the Personnel & Recruitment Sergeant will complete the PD-77 within 72 hours and forward through the chain of command. The HR Division Chief will send a formal All Personnel email notifying staff of the death and funeral arrangements.*

2. The notification of the next of kin/survivors in the Richmond Metropolitan area shall be made in person.

NOTE: Unless there is no other reasonable alternative or if time is of the essence, telephone notifications should be avoided if at all possible.

- a) When a Department **employee** is killed in the line-of-duty or is critically ill, the Chief of Police or designee shall designate an officer to inform the immediate family of the member's condition.

- SPECIAL NOTE:
- 1. If appropriate, the Department shall provide psychological debriefing and/or Police Chaplain services to agency personnel following the death or serious injury of a fellow officer or co-worker in the line-of-duty, especially, if any of the said personnel were on the scene or otherwise immediately involved in the incident.
 - 2. All Officers-In-Charge (OICs) shall ensure that the employees under their commands are **appropriately** notified of the death of the officer or employee, if at all possible.

- b) The Notification Officer shall submit a written report, through channels, to the Chief of Police or designee specifying the identity of next of kin notified as well as the time, place and the responding officer.
3. Notifications at Residence:
- a) The immediate family shall be notified as soon as possible. Whenever appropriate, a two-person team should make the notification. A male/female team is often advantageous.
 - b) The Notification Officer(s) shall never make a death notification on the doorstep. The Notification Officer(s) should always clearly identify themselves, present their credentials and ask to be admitted to the home. The officers shall gather all the persons in the home together and ask them to sit down. They should inform the family of what has happened in a slow and clear manner while providing as many specifics about the incident as known.
 - c) The reactions of the family/survivor(s) may include hysteria, anger, fainting, some may even strike out at the notifiers. Whenever the health of immediate survivors is a concern, emergency medical services shall be requested to stand by.
 - d) At the time of notification, the Notification Officer(s) should not deliver the personal belongings of the deceased. The assigned Departmental Liaison Officer shall coordinate the collection and delivery of the deceased's personal belongings at an appropriate time and in a dignified manner.
4. Notifications at Place of Employment:

- a) If the notification is to be made at the spouse/survivor's place of employment, the Notification Officer(s) shall ask to speak to the manager/supervisor, and ask if the requested person is available.

NOTE: It is not necessary to divulge any details regarding the purpose of the visit. However, the officer(s) making the notification has the discretion to inform the manager/supervisor of the nature of the visit, if it will assist in the notification process.

- b) The Notification Officer(s) shall ask management to arrange for a private room in which to make the notification.
- c) The Notification Officer(s) should permit the survivor to determine what he/she wishes to tell the manager/supervisor regarding the death. The Notification Officer(s) shall offer to contact the manager/supervisor, if that is what the survivor prefers.
- d) If the survivor leaves his/her vehicle at the workplace, arrangements should be made to ensure that the vehicle is returned to the home.

- e) If there are young children at school, the Notification Officer(s) will discuss notification arrangements with the survivor, and the officer will ensure that the survivor's wishes are quickly acted upon.
5. Notifications Out-of-the-Area:
- a) If the deceased **employee** has no immediate family in the Metro-Richmond area, the Notification Officer(s) may choose to contact the appropriate jurisdiction by telephone, in addition to the teletype message. Whenever possible, arrangements should be made to permit simultaneous telephone contacts between the surviving family members and the Richmond Police Department with the other jurisdictions.
 - b) If at all possible, the deceased **employee's** parents should be afforded the courtesy of a personal notification, if applicable.

6. ***Notifications of Death of Employee's Next-of-Kin:***

In the event of the death of an employee's next-of-kin, the Department employee shall notify his/her supervisor via email.

NOTE: A PD-77 shall only be completed for Department employees and retirees.

VI. **FORMS**

PD-77, Death Notification Form